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発明の名称

コラーゲンスポンジの製造方法

1 コラーゲン溶液を凍結乾燥させることによ ってコラーゲンスポンジを製造する方法において 、コラーゲン溶液に、水と相溶性のある有機溶媒 を添加しておくことを特徴とするコラーゲンスポ ンジの製造方法。

3. 発明の辞細な説明

(産業上の利用分野)

この発明は、コラーゲンスポンジの製造方法に 関し、詳しくは、人工皮膚や止血剤、あるいは、 細胞の高密度培養を行う際の培養用損体等として 利用されるスポンジ状のコラーゲンを製造する方 法に関するものである。

(従来の技術)

コラーゲンは、生体適合性が非常に高い蛋白質 である。そのため、医療分野とくに外科的応用分 野に広く用いられているとともに、培養分野でも

注目されている素材である。コラーゲン成形物の つの形態として、微細な孔を有する多孔質状の コラーゲンスポンジがある。このコラーゲンスポ ンジは、前記したような、人工皮膚や止血材等の 医療分野や、細胞培養用の担体等の培養分野で利・

コラーゲンスポンジを人工皮膚や細胞培養用担 体として使用する場合、スポンジ内への知胞の侵 入や増殖が良好に行えることが必要である。この ような細胞の侵入や増殖は、担体の空隙率、ある いは、孔の大きさや均一性等によって大きな影響 を受けるので、コラーゲンスポンジの製造におい ては、上記のような孔の性状を良好に制御するこ とが重要になってくる。

従来、コラーゲンスポンジの製造方法としては 、一般に、コラーゲン溶液を凍結乾燥する方法が 採用されている。この凍結乾燥法によれば、溶液 内の水分が凍結してコラーゲン線機間に微細な氷 の結晶が形成され、乾燥により、この氷の結晶が 消失した跡に前記結晶に対応する大きさの空隙が 残ることによって、多孔質のコラーゲンスポンジ が得られるというものである。

上記のような凍結乾燥法におけるコラーゲンスポンジの孔の大きさは、凍結の速度や温度、コラーゲン溶液のコラーゲン濃度等によって変化することが知られている。例えば、元の大きさは、原に比例し、コラーゲンスポンジを得るには、急速に凍結させることが好ました。 ちんれている。 そこで、 後細で均一な孔を有する コラーゲンスポンジを得るために、 コラーゲンスポンジを得るために、 コラーゲンスポンジを得るために、 コラーゲンスポンジを得るために、 コラーゲンスポンジを得るために、 ス 凍結乾燥を行う方法もある。

### (発明が解決しようとする課題)

上記したような従来の凍糖乾燥法のうち、コラーゲン溶液を、通常の冷凍庫で比較的ゆっくりと 凍結させる方法は、製造工程は簡単であるが、凍 結の際に生じる水の結晶の大きさが不均一になり 易く、均一な孔を有するコラーゲンスポンジが得 られない。液体窒素のような優低温で急速に凍結

のであり、具体的には、例えば、一般的なコラーゲン繊維分散液のほか、前配原料から通常の方法で得られる強可溶性コラーゲン、酵業可溶化コラーゲン、アルカリ可溶化コラーゲン、あるいは、これらの可溶化コラーゲンの化学修飾コラーゲン溶液、可溶化コラーゲン溶液からコラーゲン繊維を再生させた再生コラーゲン分散液等、各種のコラーゲン溶液が自由に使用できる。

させる方法であれば、氷の結晶が比較的均一な大きさに形成されるので、コラーゲンスポンジの孔の大きさも均一なものが得られる。しかし、この方法では、極めて急速に凍結が行われるため、凍結速度を調整して孔の大きさを制御することが困難であり、目的に応じた大きさの孔を備えたコラーゲンスポンジを得ることが出来なかった。

そこで、この発明の課題は、均一な孔を有する コラーケンスポンジが得られるとともに孔の大き さを容易に制御することのできるコラーゲンスポ ンジの製造方法を提供することにある。

#### (課題を解決するための手段)

上記課題を解決する、この発明のコラーゲンスポンジの製造方法は、コラーゲン溶液を凍結乾燥させることによってコラーゲンスポンジを製造する方法において、コラーゲン溶液に、水と相溶性のある有機溶媒を添加しておくようにする。

コラーゲン溶液は、通常のコラーゲンスポンツ の材料と同様に、動物の骨や皮等を原料として製 造されるコラーゲンを分散または溶解してなるも

ったりする。

コラーゲン溶液のp H は特に限定されず、上記のような各種コラーゲン溶液が均一な状態を維持できるような範囲にあればよい。

上記のようなコラーゲン溶液に、水と相溶性の ある有機溶媒を添加する。有機溶媒としては、通 常の化学処理に用いられる各種の有機溶媒のうち 、コラーゲン溶液に均一に混合可能な、水と相溶 性のあるものが使用される。具体例としては、エ タノール、メタノール、アセトン等の揮発性溶媒 が好ましいものとして挙げられる。この有腹溶媒 の添加量を調節することによって、コラーゲンス ポンジの孔の大きさを制御できる。有機溶媒の具 体的な添加量としては、有機溶媒の絶類によって も違うが、凍結乾燥させるコラーゲン溶液全体に 約3~30重量%の有機溶媒が含まれるようにし 、例えば、メタノール等の場合は、5~10重量 %程度の範囲で実施するのが好ましい。有機溶媒 の含有量が少なすぎると、スポンジの孔の均一化 等の効果が充分に挙げられず、有機溶媒の含有量

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が多すぎると、コラーゲン溶液の凍結がうまく出来ず、組織の均一なスポンジが得られない。

有機溶媒の添加量と孔径の関係は、使用する有機溶媒とコラーゲン溶液の組み合わせによっても違うが、一般的には、有機溶媒の添加量が少えるほど孔径が小さくなり、添加量が一定最以上に増えると大きになる。したがって、有機溶媒の添加量を適当を必要とによって、、前記メタノール等の場合とになる。具体的には、前記メタノール等の場合がある。10重量%の範囲では、添加量が増える程、孔径が小さくなり、約10重量%のは増えると、孔径が下さくなる。

コラーゲン溶液には、上記のような、水と相溶性のある有機溶媒に加えて、既知のコラーゲンスポンジ製造技術で採用されている各種の添加剤を添加しておくこともできる。例えば、ムコ多糖類を添加しておくと、生体適合性が良好になる。

化することができ、その結果、スポンジの孔の大 きさを均一化できる作用があると考えられる。

### (実施例)

ついで、この発明にかかるコラーゲンスポンジ の製造方法を具体的な実施例によって説明する。

### - 実施例1-

まず、コラーゲン溶液を調製する。新鮮な豚皮を脱毛、細断し、常法通り洗浄、脱脂して精製した原料を、ペプシンを用いて、通常の方法で酵素処理および精製した後、後述する有機溶媒を添加した状態でコラーゲン濃度が 0.75 重量%になるように、pHが 2.2 の酵素可溶化コラーゲンの塩酸溶液を調製した。

このコラーゲン溶液に、水と相溶性のある有機溶媒として、メタノールを、コラーゲン溶液全体の7 重量外になるように添加して均一に混合する。このコラーゲン溶液を脱気した後、トレイに流し込んで保箱させる。その後、通常の凍結乾燥工程を怪て、シート状のコラーゲンスポンジを得た。こうして得られたコラーゲンスポンジシートは

このように個製されたコラーゲン溶液を、通常のコラーゲンスポンジの製造方法と同様の工程を経て、凍結乾燥させることにより、目的とするコラーゲンスポンジが得られる。

#### (作 用)

、厚み3 mであった。電子顕微鏡で観察して孔径を測定したところ、シート表面(空気と接触していた面、以下の測定も同様)では40~120 mで平均80 m、シート裏面では30~80 mで平均60 mであった。

上記実施例 1 において、メタノールを添加しなかった以外は全く同様にして比較例 1 のコラーゲンスポンジシートを製造したところ、厚み 3 mmで、孔径は、シート表面が 1 0 ~ 1 8 0 μmで平均 7 0 μm、シート裏面が 5 ~ 1 4 0 μmで平均 3 5 μmで

この比較例1と異施例1を比較すれば、実施例1のほうが孔径のパラッキが格段に小さくなっており、この発明にかかる製造方法によって、コラーゲンスポンジシートの孔径を均一化できることが実証できた。

### 一実施例2-

実施例 I と同様の方法で得られたコラーゲン原料溶液に、苛性ソーダ溶液を加えて P H を 7.4 に 個盤した。このコラーゲン溶液に、メタノールを

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添加するとともにコラーゲン濃度を調整して、最終的なコラーゲン溶液のメタノール含有量が「重量%、コラーゲン濃度が 0.75 重量%になるようにして、ホモジナイザーにて、コラーゲン繊維を均一に破砕分散させた。

このコラーゲン溶液を脱気した後、実施例1と 同様の方法で凍糖乾燥させてコラーゲンスポンジシートを得た。こうして得られたコラーゲンスポンジシートは、厚み3 maであった。電子顕微鏡で観察して孔径を測定したところ、シート表面では20~100mで均55maであり、シート裏面では30~90maで平均50maであり、全体の平均孔径は50maであった。

上記実施例 2 において、メタノールを添加しなかった以外は全く同様にして比較例 2 のコラーゲンスポンジシートを製造したところ、厚み 3 mで 、孔径は、シート表面が 2 0 ~ 2 3 0 mで平均 7 0 m、シート裏面が 1 0 ~ 1 1 5 mで平均 4 0 m 、シート全体の平均孔径は 5 5 mであった。

この結果から、シート表面もしくは裏面におけ

る孔径のパラツキ、および、シート表面と裏面と の孔径の差は、何れも実施例2のほうが格段に少なく、シート全体の平均孔径も実施例2のほうが 小さいことが判る。

### (発明の効果)

Date: September 30, 2006

## Declaration

I, Michihiko Matsuba, President of Fukuyama Sangyo Honyaku Center, Ltd., of 16–3, 2-chome, Nogami-cho, Fukuyama, Japan, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I understand well both the Japanese and English languages and that the attached document in English is a full and faithful translation of the copy of Japanese Unexamined Patent No. Hei-2-265935 laid open on October 30, 1990.

Michihiko Matsuba

Fukuyama Sangyo Honyaku Center, Ltd.

METHOD FOR MANUFACTURING COLLAGEN SPONGE

Japanese Unexamined Patent No. Hei-2-265935

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Application No. Hei-1-89067

Filed on: April 6, 1989

Inventor: Kazuo YOSHIOKA et al.

Applicant: Nitta Gelatin Inc.

Patent Attorney: Takehiko MATSUOKA

#### SPECIFICATION

- 1. TITLE OF THE INVENTION

  METHOD FOR MANUFACTURING COLLAGEN SPONGE
- 2. WHAT IS CLAIMED IS;
- 1. A method for manufacturing a collagen sponge by freeze-drying a collagen solution, wherein an organic solvent that is compatible with water is added to the collagen solution.
- 3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[Field of the Invention]

This invention relates to a method for manufacturing a collagen sponge, and particularly, relates to a method for manufacturing sponge-like collagen to be used as an artificial skin, a hemostatic agent, or a culturing substrate for

high-density cell culturing, etc.
[Prior Arts]

Collagen is a protein of extremely high biocompatibility. It is thus used widely in medical fields, especially in surgical applications, and is also a material that is being noted in culturing fields. As one form of a formed object of collagen, there is a porous collagen sponge that has minute pores. This collagen sponge is used in applications such as those mentioned above, that is, as an artificial skin, a hemostatic agent, etc., in medical fields or as a cell culturing substrate, etc., in culturing fields.

For a collagen sponge to be used as an artificial skin or a cell culturing substrate, cells must be able to penetrate and proliferate satisfactorily in the sponge. Because such penetration and proliferation of cells is largely influenced by the porosity of the substrate or the sizes and uniformity of pores, etc., it is important to have good control of such properties of pores in manufacturing a collagen sponge.

As a conventional method for manufacturing a collagen sponge, a method of freeze-drying a collagen solution is generally employed. With this freeze-drying method, water in the solution freezes, forming minute crystals of ice between collagen fibers, and by voids of sizes corresponding to the above-mentioned

crystals being left after disappearance of the ice crystals by drying, a porous collagen sponge is obtained.

It is known that with the above-described freeze-drying method, the sizes of the pores of the collagen sponge vary according to the rate and temperature of freezing, the collagen concentration of the collagen solution, etc. For example, the pore size is proportional to the freezing temperature and is inversely proportional to the collagen concentration and freezing rate. It is also known that it is preferable to freeze rapidly to obtain a uniform collagen sponge. There is thus a method of performing freeze-drying, in which a collagen solution is frozen rapidly in liquid nitrogen to obtain a collagen sponge with minute, uniform pores.

[Problems to be Solved by the Invention]

Of the above-described conventional freeze-drying methods, with the method in which the collagen solution is frozen comparatively slowly in a normal freezer, though the manufacturing process is simple, the ice crystals that form in the freezing process tend to be non-uniform in size and a collagen sponge with uniform pores cannot be obtained. With the method of freezing rapidly at an ultralow temperature, such as that of liquid nitrogen, because the ice crystals are formed to comparatively uniform size, a collagen sponge with uniform

pore size can be obtained. However, with this method, because freezing is carried out extremely rapidly, it is difficult to control the pore sizes by adjusting the freezing rate, and a collagen sponge with pores of sizes that suit a purpose cannot be obtained.

An object of this invention is thus to provide a collagen sponge manufacturing method, with which a collagen sponge with uniform pores can be obtained and the sizes of the pores can be controlled readily.

### [Means for Solving the Problems]

A collagen sponge manufacturing method according to this invention that achieves the above object is a method for manufacturing a collagen sponge by freeze-drying a collagen solution, and with this method, an organic solvent that is compatible with water is added to the collagen solution.

As with the material of a normal collagen sponge, the collagen solution is prepared by dispersing or dissolving collagen, manufactured from animal bone, skin, etc., as the raw material, and specifically, besides a general collagen fiber dispersion, an acid-soluble collagen, an enzyme-solubilized collagen, or alkali-solubilized collagen, obtained by a normal method from the above-mentioned raw material, or a chemically modified collagen solution of any

of the above solubilized collagens, a regenerated collagen dispersion, with which collagen fibers are regenerated from a solubilized collagen solution, or any of other various collagen solutions can be used freely.

The collagen concentration in the collagen solution, at the stage at which the organic solvent, etc., to be described later have been blended and the solution is ready to be used in the freeze-drying step, is preferably approximately 0.1 to 5 weight % and more preferably approximately 0.1 to 2 weight %. When the collagen concentration is less than 0.1 weight %, the texture of the sponge that is manufactured becomes rough and thus weaker in strength, and a uniform sponge cannot be obtained. In the excess of 5 weight %, the viscosity of the collagen solution becomes too high and because the organic solvent cannot be stirringly mixed uniformly, the sponge that is manufactured becomes non-uniform and poor in molding properties in a process of freeze-drying upon molding the collagen solution to a desired product shape.

The pH of the collagen solution is not restricted in particular, and it is sufficient that the pH be in a range in which any of the various collagen solutions mentioned above can be maintained in a uniform state.

The organic solvent that is compatible with water is added

to the collagen solution described above. Among various organic solvents used for normal chemical processes, an organic solvent that can be mixed uniformly with the collagen solution and is compatible with water is used as the organic solvent. As specific examples that are preferable, ethanol, methanol, acetone, and other volatile solvents can be cited. By adjusting the added amount of the organic solvent, the sizes of the pores of the collagen sponge can be controlled. Though the specific added amount of the organic solvent differs according to the type of the organic solvent, approximately 3 to 30 weight  $% \frac{1}{2}$ of the organic solvent is made to be contained in the entire collagen solution to be freeze-dried, and for example, in the case of methanol, etc., the added amount is preferably set in a range of approximately 5 to 10 weight %. When the organic solvent content is too low, the effects of making the pores of the sponge uniform, etc., cannot be exhibited adequately, and when the organic solvent content is too high, the collagen solution does not freeze well and a sponge of uniform texture cannot be obtained.

Though the relationship between the added amount of the organic solvent and the pore diameter differs according to the combination of the organic solvent and collagen solution used, in general, in a range of low added amount of the organic solvent,

the pore diameter decreases as the added amount of the organic solvent increases, and when the added amount becomes equal to or greater than a certain amount, the pore diameter increases as the added amount of the organic solvent is increased. Thus, by appropriately adjusting the added amount of the organic solvent, the pore diameter can be set to the minimum. Specifically, with the above-mentioned methanol, etc., when the added amount is in a range of 5 to 10 weight %, the pore diameter decreases as the added amount increases and becomes minimum at approximately 10 weight %, and when the added amount increases further beyond 10 weight %, the pore diameter increases again.

In addition to the above-described organic solvent compatible with water, any of various additives that are employed in known arts for manufacturing a collagen sponge can be added to the collagen solution. For example, by adding a mucopolysaccharide, the biocompatibility is improved.

The intended collagen sponge is then obtained by freeze-drying the collagen solution thus prepared by the same process as that of a normal collagen sponge manufacturing method.

### [Action]

With the freeze-drying method of manufacturing a collagen

sponge, the sizes of the pores of the manufactured collagen sponge differ according to the sizes of the ice crystals that are formed when the collagen solution is frozen. It is considered that due to the presence of an appropriate amount of the water-compatible organic solvent in the collagen solution, excessive growth of ice crystals in the freezing process is suppressed and the pores of the collagen sponge are made uniform in size. Also, though in a case where the collagen solution is frozen in a tray, etc., because within the collagen solution, the liquid level surface and the surfaces in contact with wall surfaces of the tray differ in freezing rate and thus differ in the growth rate of ice crystals and consequently in the sponge pore size, it is considered that the presence of the water-compatible organic solvent provides the action of enabling the freezing rate of the entire solution, from the top surface of the collagen solution to the surfaces in contact with the tray, to be averaged out and consequently enable the sponge to be made uniform in pore size.

### [Examples]

The collagen sponge manufacturing method according to this invention shall now be described by way of specific examples.

### - Example 1 -

First, a collagen solution was prepared. A raw material,

obtained by depilating and chopping fresh pig hide and then performing refining by washing and defatting by common procedures, was subject to enzyme treatment and refinement by normal methods using pepsin to prepare enzyme-solubilized collagen, and thereafter using this collagen, a hydrochloric acid solution, with a pH of 2.2, was prepared in a manner such that the collagen concentration became 0.75 weight % in a state in which an organic solvent to be described below was added.

To this collagen solution, methanol was added, as the organic solvent compatible with water, at an amount such that the concentration thereof was 7 weight % of the entire collagen solution and mixing uniformly was performed. After deaerating this collagen solution, the collagen solution was poured into a tray and frozen. After then, performing a normal freezedrying process, a sheet-form collagen sponge was obtained. The collagen sponge sheet thus obtained had a thickness of 3mm. The pore diameters, measured by observation by an electron microscope, were 40 to 120 $\mu$ m and 80 $\mu$ m on the average at a top surface of the sheet (surface in contact with air, the same applies to measurement results that follow) and 30 to 80 $\mu$ m and 60 $\mu$ m on the average at a rear surface of the sheet.

With a collagen sponge sheet of a Comparative Example 1, manufactured by exactly the same method as that of the Example

1 with the exception of not adding methanol, the thickness was 3mm and the pore diameters were 10 to  $180\mu m$  and  $70\mu m$  on the average at the top surface of the sheet and 5 to  $140\mu m$  and  $35\mu m$  on the average at the rear surface of the sheet.

A comparison of the Comparative Example 1 and the Example 1 shows that with the Example 1, the variation of pore diameters is significantly smaller and, it was thus verified that the collagen sponge sheet can be made uniform in pore diameter by the manufacturing method according to this invention.

### - Example 2 -

A caustic soda solution was added to a collagen raw material solution, obtained by the same method as that of Example 1, to adjust the pH to 7.4. After adding methanol to this collagen solution and adjusting the collagen concentration so that with the collagen solution at the final stage, the methanol concentration was 7 weight % and the collagen concentration was 0.75 weight %, the collagen fibers were broken up and dispersed uniformly by a homogenizer.

After deaerating the collagen solution, freeze-drying was performed by the same method as that of the Example 1 to obtain a collagen sponge sheet. The collagen sponge sheet thus obtained had a thickness of 3mm. The pore diameters, measured by observation by an electron microscope, were 20 to 100µm and

 $55\mu m$  on the average at the top surface of the sheet, 30 to  $90\mu m$  and  $50\mu m$  on the average at the rear surface of the sheet, and the average pore diameter of the entirety was  $50\mu m$ .

With a collagen sponge sheet of a Comparative Example 2, manufactured by exactly the same method as that of the Example 2 with the exception of not adding methanol, the thickness was 3mm, the pore diameters were 20 to 230µm and 70µm on the average at the top surface of the sheet, 10 to 115µm and 40µm on the average at the rear surface of the sheet, and the average pore diameter of the entirety was 55µm.

These results show that the variation of the pore diameters at the top surface and the rear surface of the sheet and the difference of the pore diameters between the top surface and the rear surface of the sheet were both significantly lower with the Example 2 and the average pore diameter of the entire sheet was lower with the Example 2.

[Effects of the Invention]

With the collagen sponge manufacturing method according to this invention described above, by adding an organic solvent that is compatible with water to a collagen solution, the pores of a collagen sponge obtained by freeze-drying can be made uniform and a collagen sponge favorable for medical use, culturing applications, etc., can be manufactured. In

particular, because the size of the pores of the collagen sponge can be controlled readily by the added amount of the organic solvent, a collagen sponge of optimal pore size can be manufactured according to purpose. Thus, for example, a collagen sponge that is optimal as a cell culturing microsubstrate, with which the porosity and pore size must be controlled accurately, can be provided.

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